

## **Islam and Christianity**

by

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*'In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful. Oh our dear Lord, we are gathered before You in Your sight. You can see us even though we may not see You. May all the thoughts of our minds, the intentions of our hearts, the words of our mouths, and the actions of our lives be guided by You and pleasing to You. Be with us and all those whom we love, and bless us with Your infinite grace. Amin.'*

### **Islam a Continuation of Judaism and Christianity**

Muslims are so often portrayed as being militant fanatics, the enemies of Jews and Christians that people in the West are often very surprised to discover that Islam in fact claims to be a continuation and reform of the Judaic and Christian faiths.

*'To those who believe in God and His messengers, and make no distinction between any of the messengers, We shall soon grant their due rewards.'* (Surah 4:152).

*'O people of the Book, you have no ground to stand on unless you stand fast by the Law, the Gospel, and all the revelation that has come to you from God.'* (Surah 5:68).

### **Only One Supreme Being**

People of all three faiths based on that of Abraham worship the same God, whether they call Him 'I am that I am' (Jehovah), 'Our Father which art in Heaven,' or 'Allah (the Almighty) the Compassionate, the Merciful.' Non-Muslims may be surprised to discover the strong respect shown to Jesus (pbuh) in the Islamic tradition, or to find out that Islam has anything to do with Jesus (pbuh) at all. At the same time, there is certainly a resistance in Islam to the trinitarian doctrines the Church has taught about Jesus (pbuh), and the Zionist aspect of Jewish nationalism, both of which Muslims feel should be actively opposed.

Some people try to understand Islam without its Jewish or Christian background. Others argue that the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was heavily influenced by those faiths but merely presented an ignorant or garbled version of them. They assume Muhammad (pbuh) wrote the Qur'an himself, and, where it offers different details from the Old or New Testaments, that he either did not fully understand what those older faiths had taught, or simply made mistakes. Muslims, of course take a completely different point of view.

We believe that by logic and definition there cannot be more than one Supreme Being. We emphasize that the 'three religions' of Judaism, Christianity and Islam all sprang from the same small patch of sand, the same region and background, and do in truth worship the same Divine Being. The founders and eminent messengers even all share the same family tree – Abraham (pbuh), Moses (pbuh), David (pbuh), Jesus (pbuh), Muhammad (pbuh). Jews, Christians and Muslims are all 'People of the Book', that is, the revealed words of God.

### **Muslims do NOT worship Muhammad**

Muslims most certainly do *not* worship the Prophet (pbuh) and do not believe that their religion originated with him. The origin of Islam is God Himself, and all true religions are revelations from the One and the Same God, which He set in existence Himself when he communed with the first human beings. All human beings who submit their lives to Him are natural Muslims, even if they do not perform the rituals of Islam. Many Jews and Christians would certainly object to saying 'I am a Muslim,' but could happily state 'I am submitted to the One True God,' which really means the same thing.

Some misguided Muslims do take a rather unfortunate attitude towards Jews and Christians, and even become hostile towards them, choosing not to forgive Jews for believing themselves to be a 'chosen race' or having various political agendas such as expansionist Zionism, or Christians for committing the sin of elevating their prophet to the status of a God.

The Prophet's (pbuh) attitude towards the People of the Book, on the contrary, was to regard them always as worshippers of the same One True God, following the same line of Divine Revelation through the same stream of prophets, and who, having been led astray by all-too-human motivation that had influenced and altered the pure teachings, could be influenced back again to the true path through the Revelation of the

Qur'an, the example of the Prophet's (pbuh) noble life, and by reasoned argument and logic. In other words, despite the historical struggles the Prophet (pbuh) was obliged to face with particular Jews who reneged on their political alliance with him and committed treason, he regarded all Jews and Christians as 'born' Muslims (born on '*fitrah*'), and potential future Muslims through his message. Forbearance, long-suffering, pardoning, and patience were the qualities the Prophet (pbuh) gave as his example.

### **The Way of Compassion and Generosity**

Muhammad (pbuh) was ordered by Allah Himself not to take an antagonistic approach: '*Take the way of pardon; advise the correct and turn aside from the ignorant.*' (Surah 7:199). It was related that when this passage was revealed to him, he asked Jibril to interpret it for him. Jibril told him to wait while he asked the One Who knew. He left the Prophet (pbuh), then came back and said: 'O Muhammad, Allah commands you to unite yourself with those who cut you off, and to give to those who refuse to give to you, and to pardon those who are unjust to you.'

'*O people of the Book!*' Allah urged us to say: '*Come to that which is common between us – that we do not worship anything besides God, that we do not associate anything with Him, and that we do not take one another as lords besides God.*' If the Jews or Christians refused to accept this, Muslims were not to persecute them, but simply to bear witness that Muslims, at least, were submitted to God.

We have the record of the Prophet's (pbuh) attitude to and relationship with many Jews and Christians, and a specific example of the Prophet's (pbuh) *dawah* (ie, preaching) to Christians. Some of his famous Companions who were Ahl al-Kitab were Khadijah's cousin Waraqah ibn Nawfal, the Prophet's (pbuh) own cousin Ubaydallah ibn Jahsh, Salman al-Farsi, the Negus Ashamah of Abyssinia, Rabbi Husayn ibn Sallam (Abu Yusuf) and Rabbi Mukhayriq, who made the Prophet (pbuh) his heir.

On one occasion some sixty horsemen from Najran, Christians who had been financed and encouraged by the Byzantine Emperor, arrived in Madinah to see him. They had sympathy with Muhammad's (pbuh) teaching, and admired the religious practices he was inaugurating – but they were concerned to defend the role of Jesus (pbuh) as the Divine Son of God, the second 'person' in their Holy Trinity. The entire edifice of Christianity as it was then being propounded depended on the literal

acceptance of an original sin, committed by Adam and Eve, which was then passed on to all humanity by inheritance, and from which it was impossible for any human being, no matter how devout, to escape without extra Divine help. Thus, it was a necessary part of their faith that God Himself should become incarnate in human flesh, so that He might become a being that was both God and Man – and therefore more than Man - so that He might bring about the means for Man to escape the clutches of original sin; but at the same time he had to be part of humanity, so that Man might logically be the one paying the redemption for that sin. Jesus (pbuh), they reasoned, was this God-Man, and the whole point of his incarnation on earth was in order to die as a sacrifice of God Himself, to God Himself, to save or redeem humanity from its impossible situation.

In response to this the revelation of Surah 112 was given – *‘He, Allah is One; God the Eternal. He neither begets nor was begotten, and there is none equal to Him.’*

So, what about that delegation from Najran? They decided not to abandon their Nicene Creed, (the Creed not formulated by the Church until 325 CE, and only then after much persecution and heated debate), and left without accepting Islam. Surah 112, which was perfectly in keeping with what Jews believed, was not acceptable to them. Did the walls of Madinah echo with outrage at these *kuffar*? Did the devout Muslims draw back from them and snub them, or become hostile or abusive? Not at all. Despite their rejection, the Christians were treated with the utmost hospitality and respect, allowed to erect their tents in the security of Prophet’s (pbuh) mosque, and had all provisions of food and drink supplied to them. When they left, they were given gifts to take with them, and guards rode with them to guarantee their safety. Had it all been a waste of time? Indeed not - one member of the delegation, Abu Harithah, admitted to his friends that he was absolutely convinced of the truth of Muhammad’s (pbuh) message, but he felt that he could not personally accept Islam because of what he owed in finances, honour and respect to his people. Who knows what results came to pass in the months and years to come?

As the Prophet Jesus (pbuh) taught, the Kingdom of God grows like a farmer scattering his seed upon the earth, and then he sleeps and rises night and day, and the seed sprouts and grows, he knows not how. Yet a green shoot sprouts, then the ear of corn, and finally corn ripe for harvesting. (St Mark’s Gospel 4:25-28). Who would imagine, he also said, that such a

tiny thing as a grain of mustardseed should grow to be such a large shrub that birds make nests in its shade? (Mk 4:30-32).

**We do not deny or reject the teachings and messages of Jesus (pbuh), for we believe that what was taught by all the prophets came from the same Almighty Being. But we challenge some of the theology taught *about* him.**

The Qur'an was sent some six hundred years after the earthly life of Jesus (pbuh), not as a new religion, but intended specifically to reform religious thought and to bring believers back from the development of Trinitarianism (which had evolved from previous Triad worship) to the purity of monotheism. Islam therefore inevitably comes into conflict with those Jews and Christians who have closed their minds to the possibility of further revelation after the Testaments of the Bible, and also those who choose to ignore the very clear revelation presented by the prophet Ezekiel (in Arabic Dhu'l Fikl) in the 18<sup>th</sup> chapter of his book.

**Who taught the Atonement Theory of God sacrificing Himself in order to Forgive Human Beings?**

The vitally important passage of Ezekial 18.1-9 is always ignored by those who accept the Atonement theory of the death of Jesus, for the word of the Lord came to Ezekiel specifically concerning the subject of inherited sin.

*'What do you mean by repeating this proverb concerning the land of Israel, (that) 'the fathers have eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge'? As I live, says the Lord God, this proverb shall no more be used by you in Israel. Behold, all souls are Mine; the soul of the father as well as the soul of the son are Mine; only the soul that sins shall die. If a person is righteous and does what is lawful and right.....he shall surely live, says the Lord God.'* (Ezek 18:1-9).

**God Always Forgives the Penitent**

Jesus taught this very clearly in his most famous of parables – the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32). A foolish young man sinned, and ended up in the gutter. When he came to his senses and realised what he had done, he decided to go home and beg for forgiveness - perhaps his father would take him back as a servant. The father (who represents God in this story) saw him coming, and 'while he was still a long way off, he had

compassion, and ran out to meet him and embraced him and kissed him.’ The boy tried to apologise, but the father was already rejoicing. ‘This my son was dead,’ he said, ‘but now he is alive again. He was lost, and is found.’ (Lk 15:11-32)

Unfortunately, even as Jesus told the story, he was aware of well-meaning and pious people in his own audience who could not imitate the open arms of God for the returning sinner. The bad boy had a ‘good’ elder brother, who refused to accept him and share the father’s joy.

But Jesus taught that not only was God *always* ready to forgive the penitent, but that sins against God were actually more easily forgiven than sins against other humans, since those required proper restitution in human terms, and that was much harder to achieve. This is also taught in Islam. God will only accept the repentance of a person who had offended another person *once he has appeased the human brother*.

As Jesus said:- ‘*If you are before the altar of God and there you remember that you have offended someone, leave your gift and go! First be reconciled to your brother, then you may come and make your gift to God.*’ (Mt 5:24).

In fact, Jesus taught that because of God’s compassion that there would be *more joy* in heaven over one sinner that repented than over ninety-nine just people who did not need to repent. (Lk 15:7,10).

Many moving hadiths express God’s generous love, and longing to forgive.

*‘I am with him when he makes mention of Me. If he draws near to Me a hand’s span, I draw near to him an arm’s length.’* (Hadith Qudsi).

*‘A man said of another – "By Allah, Allah will never forgive him!" At this Allah the Almighty said – "Who is this who swears by me that I will never forgive a certain person? Truly I have forgiven him already.’* (Hadith Qudsi).

In the split second in which a person suddenly realises the truth Jesus taught in his famous parable, and admits that Jesus’ death could therefore *not* have been an atoning sacrifice, and that belief in it as the only means of salvation is actually a blasphemous denial of the

compassionate nature of God there comes the possibility of a devout Christian accepting Islam.

*‘O son of Adam – so long as you call upon Me and ask of Me I shall forgive you for what you have done.... were you to come to Me with sins as great as the earth itself, and were you them to face Me, ascribing no partner to Me, I would forgive you in equal measure.’* (Hadith Tirimidhi, Ahmad).

The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) (like all the Jewish prophets before him) taught that it was nonsense to think that any sacrifice of blood, animal or human, can somehow bribe God, or ‘buy’ God’s forgiveness; it is only the turning of the heart that can do that. And we can never adequately *earn* God’s forgiveness, but what matters is our love for Him, and how hard we try, and His grace towards us.

### **Muhammad, the Final Brick in the Edifice**

In other words, the idea that we humans suffer from the inescapable taint of Original Sin and have a need for an atoning saviour is simply not a part of Judaism, and has never been a part of Islam. All God’s messengers taught that the idea that one person could ‘buy off’ the sins of another was unjust, if not absurd. And the Prophet of Islam (pbuh), contemplating his relationship to the famous Biblical messengers, likened himself not to an innovator, but to the final brick in a beautiful building.

‘The parable of myself and the messengers before me is like that of a person who constructed a building, and built it fine and well, and made it complete but for one brick in one of its corners. People walked round it, and the building pleased them, and they said: ‘But for that one brick, your building would have been perfect.’ Muhammad (pbuh) said: ‘I am that final brick.’ (Hadith Muslim 5674).

The Revelation of the Qur’an takes exactly the same stance as the Biblical prophets. Surah 2:136 stated categorically: *‘We (Muslims) believe in God and in what has been revealed to us, to Ibrahim (pbuh) , Isma’il (pbuh), Ishaq (pbuh), Yaqub (pbuh) and his children. We believe in what has been revealed to Musa (pbuh), and to ‘Isa (pbuh), as well as in all the revelations which the prophets have received from their Lord. We do not differentiate between them. And we have submitted ourselves to God.’* In other words, all Jews and Christians were called to accept all prophets as being from the same Divine Source, with compatible messages from the One True God.



Two further conclusions follow from this text – that Muslims accept that neither ‘Isa (pbuh), nor Muhammad (pbuh), nor Uzayr (Ezra, pbuh) nor any other of the prophets ever claimed to be *more than* messengers from that One True God; and secondly, that it is not a proper exercise for believers to try to ‘guess’ which of the prophets were ‘better’ or ‘the best’. A Muslim should neither claim that Muhammad (pbuh) was greater than ‘Isa (pbuh), or vice versa.

### **To Become Muslims, Christians must sacrifice Trinitarianism**

It is the hardest thing in the world, and seems so unreasonable and such a betrayal, for a Christian to begin considering that it is not only mistaken but *wrong* to believe that Jesus was God’s Son, in that special Trinitarian sense. It is so automatic for Christians to end their prayers with the almost unconscious formulae ‘in Jesus’ name’, or ‘through Jesus Christ our Lord’. Since childhood, Christians celebrate, with rituals enhanced by emotion, God being born as a helpless baby in the Bethlehem stable at Christmas, and the sacrificial death of Jesus on the cross and his resurrection to glory at Easter - the two supreme demonstrations of God’s amazing love for humanity. The more humble and adoring and fervent the Christian in response to this incredible love (quite unearned by us, but the gift of God’s grace), the nearer to God. Or so Christians are taught to believe. It takes enormous moral courage to stand back from this viewpoint, and reconsider the grounds of one’s faith.

The three religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam do indeed all worship the same God, even though some followers of each faith might not have realised it, or might have been confused by the fact that they practice different forms of prayer and use different names for God. Some people know that God is called Jehovah in the Old Testament; however, only certain groups of Christians refer to God as *Jehovah*, for many Bibles do not use the sacred name but regard it as more humble to simply say ‘the Lord’. The name ‘Jehovah’ is just as unfamiliar as ‘Allah’ to many Christians, yet Allah is simply the Arabic word for ‘the Almighty’, the word normally used by Arabic-speaking Christians as well as Muslims in the Middle East. However, this unfamiliarity gives the false impression that Allah is a different god, a rival god - a notion strongly backed up, of course, by events in past history such as the Crusades, or the Christian knights versus the Moorish conquerors of Spain, when the two sides were pitted against each other as enemies.



Hardly any Christians use the Hebrew name *Yahweh*, the name God revealed to Moses when he asked Him directly to tell him His name. *Yahweh* is derived from God's statement: '*Ehyeh asher ehyeh*', a phrase with several choices of meaning ranging from 'I am that I am' to 'I will be as I will be' or 'I cause to be what I cause to be', or any combination of these. (Exodus 3:14). It is not really a name, but a statement of Existence and Causality and Permanence. The point that needs to be understood by all is that God the Father, Jehovah, *Yahweh* and Allah are all one and the same God.

Secondly, the respect that true Islam grants to the founders, scriptures and followers of Judaism and Christianity, is not just courtesy but an acknowledgement that Islam does not see them as 'other religions' which it should tolerate, but as part of itself - as truly revealed religion from God. In this, Islam is unique - for no other religion in the world has made belief in the truth of 'other religions' a necessary condition of its own faith and witness. This is a very vital point to impress on those Muslims who have concluded that all Jews and Christians are doomed, and will go straight to Hell.

In Madinah, a Jew could model his life on the Torah and do so supported by the public laws of the State; in fact, the non-Jewish State put its executive power at the service of rabbinic law. Islam gives the maximum that can be given to Judaism and Christianity. It acknowledges their founders, prophets, scriptures and teachings. It declares its God and the God of Jews and Christians to be One and the Same. It commands Muslims to be the assistants, friends and supporters of Jews and Christians, under God, protecting both them and their places of worship. It regards the differences between them as surmountable through more knowledge, goodwill and wisdom, treating these differences as 'domestic disputes' within one and the same religious 'family'.

*'Did not Allah check one set of people by means of another there would surely have been pulled down monasteries, churches, synagogues and mosques in which the name of Allah is commemorated in abundant measure. Allah will certainly aid those who aid His (cause); for verily Allah is Full of Strength Exalted in Might.'* (Surah 22:40).

*'And who are more unjust than those who forbid that in places for the worship of Allah Allah's name should be celebrated? Whose zeal is (in fact) to ruin them? It was not fitting that such should themselves enter them except in reverence.'* (Surah 2:114).

Where Muslims and Christians are poles apart is the matter of how they interpret the person and role of the historical Jesus. If a Christian believes in Trinitarian theology, to state that Jesus was *not* God is blasphemy; it undermines the entire edifice (and point) of salvation theology, and renders the necessity of Jesus' incarnation and crucifixion meaningless. Certainly if Christians abandoned the notion of Christ's divinity, they would lose entirely the belief in the necessity of Jesus as a 'God-man' as a vehicle for salvation - or that belief in Jesus in those terms could bring a person forgiveness of sins and eternal life.

### **St. Paul's error of logic**

As St Paul bluntly put it in 1 Corinthians 15:12-19: 'If there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised; if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified that He raised Christ, whom He did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised...If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. Then those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If for this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of men most to be pitied.'

The errors of logic made by St Paul, as far as Muslims are concerned, are that he equates God's raising of Jesus to a proof of his divinity, and he suggests that our faith in God and the afterlife is futile if the claim that Jesus rose again from the dead was not true. I suggest that the two things do not follow. Why should *our* faith in God be futile, whether or not Jesus was raised from the dead?

For a Muslim (or a Jew) to state that Jesus *is* God is blasphemy; God is One, the Absolute, the All-in-All, the Supreme. There is none like unto Him, and He should not really be thought of in human terms at all. He has no 'partners' or 'sharers' or 'offspring', and does not mingle in any way with created matter. He is the Creator of that matter. Even the word *He* is misleading; Muslims always prefer to say 'Allah' rather than 'God' or 'He', for this word is an identity with no gender connections. One can have Father/Mother, or god/goddess - one cannot have Allah/Allahess or Allahs. Allah is One.

This is why Muslim knowledge of Jewish and Christian scriptures is important. If it is really true that all the prophets received their revelations from the same God, then it should be quite possible to illustrate Islam to Jews and Christians from their own texts. In fact, it is possible, and it is

basically how I came into Islam myself. It is a well-known fact that converts usually refer to themselves as reverts, feeling, when they enter Islam, that this is what they have believed in their hearts all along. They feel they have come home, and at last everything makes sense.

### **Coming into Islam Through the Gospels**

For example, Jesus was on record as calling himself ‘the Son of Man’, and not ‘Son of God’.

### **Jesus resisted temptations to call himself Son of God**

Christians know that he faced three rather odd temptations from Shaytan at the start of his ministry – but it makes far more sense when you realise that what he was really being tempted to do was not to turn stones into bread, jump from the pinnacle of the Temple, or wish for the world’s nations to bow down to him – but three times he was tempted to think of himself as the Son of God. He refused outright, stating bluntly: *‘You shall not tempt the Lord your God. Begone, Shaytan! For it is written: **You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only shall you serve**’.* (Mt 4:7,10 – quoting Deuteronomy 6:13).

### **The most important teaching?**

Now take the reply given by Jesus when a Jewish religious teacher asked him to give a direct answer to a particular question, in a face-to-face interview. If we consider all the many teachings of God, which is the most important?

‘Which commandment is the first (or most important) of all?’ This was Jesus’ famous reply:

*‘This is the first commandment. Hear, O Israel! The Lord our God, the Lord is One. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength’. And the second is this: ‘You shall love your neighbour as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.’ Then the scribe said to him: ‘You are right, Rabbi. You have truly said that He is One, and there is no other but He; and to love Him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the strength, and to love one’s neighbour as oneself, is much more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.’ And*

*when Jesus heard that he answered wisely, he said to him: 'Truly, you are not far from the Kingdom of God.'* (Mk 12:28-34).

### **What do we need to do to gain Eternal Life?**

Was Jesus ever asked directly what it was that a person had to do in order to be granted eternal life? Yes indeed – it was recorded that a young nobleman asked precisely that, calling him 'Good Master'. Surprisingly - if Trinitarians are correct - Jesus did not expound to him the 'orthodox' teachings about original sin and the need for a redeemer. He said simply: *'Why do you call me good? No-one is good but God Alone.'* He then informed him that he should keep God's commandments, and when this ruler commented that he had done so all his life, Jesus requested him to give up his wealth to the poor in exchange for treasure in Heaven. This the man was unable to do, and went away sorrowful. (Mk 10:17-22).

### **Our Father**

When Jesus taught his disciples to pray, he said *'Our Father, who art in Heaven.'* Yes, Jesus was truly God's dear son - but so are all of us His children.

### **No man comes to the Father but by me**

The most quoted Christian 'trump-card' texts come from St John's Gospel, such statements as: *'I am the way, the truth and the life. No-one comes to the Father, but by me,'* (Jn 14:6); *'I am the Light of the world; he who follows me will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life,'* (Jn 8:12); *'I am the Resurrection and the Life; he who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live,'* (Jn 11:25), etc. Christians would certainly take these sayings to mean that Muslims and Christians cannot both be right, and since from the Christian point of view Christianity is right, a person *must* be a Christian, believing in Jesus as the Son of God, in order to find salvation. The Muslim answer to that is two fold; firstly, we must go into the scholarly examination of the background to the gospels to try to deduce which phrases are genuinely from Jesus and which from later editors with axes to grind. Most Christian scholars themselves conclude that St. John's Gospel is a late work, of multiple authorship, and in its final stage a profound meditation probably expressing the interpretation of Jesus current in Ephesus - and we should not attribute these sayings to Jesus himself. I have presented many thoughts concerning these subjects in my book *'Mysteries of Jesus'*, Sakina Press. Yet for centuries, instead

of querying the background, authorship and circumstances of these verses, Christian preachers have been utilising them to justify a feeling of superiority, especially when confronted by those who claim to believe in their same God but have different views of the person of Jesus.

An alternative reply could be that in fact one could *accept* that at the time when Jesus lived Jesus *was indeed* the Messenger of that period, and ‘the way’ to God.

### **I and the Father are one**

As for the notion that Jesus was ‘one with God’ (*I and the Father are one*’ - Jn 10:39), I suggest simply that the phrase does not at all imply the unity of Three Persons in One Godhead, but unity of purpose. ‘Holy Father, keep them in Thy name, that they may be one even as we are one...the glory which Thou hast given me I have given to them, *that they may be one even as we are one...*’ (Jn 17:11,22-24). The last sentence is the important one – it was never intended to imply that all believers in God should actually become part of the Godhead!

Muslims using St. John’s Gospel should concentrate on Jesus’ own answer when he was asked specifically what a person had to do in order to gain eternal life. He replied that eternal life was this: ‘*that they know Thee, the only True God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent,*’ (Jn 17:3), ‘*so that the world may know that Thou hast sent me, and hast loved them even as Thou has loved me.*’ (Jn 17:23). ‘*He who believes in me, believes not in me but in Him who sent me.*’ (Jn 12:44). This is precisely what we Muslims maintain.

### **Conclusion**

So, let us walk again on the hills of Galilee, or in the wilderness of sand where the sun hammers down by day and the light of huge stars guide the wayfarer at night. Let us try, if we can, to keep company for a while with the nomad herdsman Abraham, the shepherd David, the tree-tender Amos, the carpenter Jesus, the honest merchant Muhammad, and feel a kinship with their disciples, common folk who were so certain of the simplicity, the truth, the logic, the rightness of what these Messengers taught that they could share it easily with others, and were prepared to hand over their lives in love to the God Who was being revealed to them. Let us blow away the tangle of cobwebs from the mind, and submit to His will as being the most reasonable and right way of life that there could possibly be!

*'I will lift up my eyes to the hills. From whence does my help come? My help comes from the Lord, who has made heaven and earth. He will not let your foot be moved; He who keeps you will not slumber ... The Lord is your Keeper; the Lord is your shade on your right hand ... The Lord will keep you from all evil; He will keep your life. Your Lord will watch over your going out and your coming in from this time forth and for evermore.'* (Psalm 121).

*'In the name of Allah, the Most Compassionate, the Most Gracious ... there is no God but He, the Living, the Self-Subsisting, the Eternal. No slumber can seize Him nor sleep. His are all the things in the heavens and on earth. Who is there who can intercede in His presence, except as He wills? He knows everything present, past or future. None of His creatures can know anything of His knowledge, except as He wills it. His throne extends over the heavens and the earth, and He is never tired in guarding and preserving them, for He is the Most High, the Supreme.'* (surah 2:255).